

**FRS Regional Data Stewards Network
Meeting/Conference Call Notes – April 6th, 2000**

Handouts: OIC distributed the following materials prior to the meeting/conference call: (1) a Draft Data Steward's Manual.

Participants: Bill Sonntag & Pat Garvey, OEI/OIC; James Rothwell, OIG; Mark Townsend, OPPTS; Rebecca Kemp & Rich Nawyn, R-IV; Laura Milton, OECA; Dave Levy, OSWER; Robert Fallis, R-IX; Mae Dooley, R-III; Dalroy Ward & Helene Bethel, SDC/SAIC; Cynthia Culvert, ABT Associates; and Chuck Herrick, PERI Environmental Associates.

Background: Mr. Sonntag welcomed the group and asked for comments and/or suggested revisions to the minutes from the last (3/30) meeting. None were offered. Sonntag then briefed the group and solicited participation for an upcoming conference call (4/6) with representatives of States that have expressed interest in the FRS, including MD, MN, NJ, PA, and WA.

Summary of Discussions: Most of the discussion focused on the Draft Data Steward's Manual (DSM), distributed electronically on 4/5. It was noted that several participants had not had enough time to fully review the document. Major issues and themes are summarized below:

Need to Institutionalize Data Stewardship: Several participants felt that the DSM, especially the Principles Section, was overly oriented toward a "voluntaristic" approach to data stewardship. There was discussion about how to institutionalize data stewardship within the Agency, particularly media programs. It was agreed that the DSM and other aspects of the FRS Project Plan would benefit from broader State and Program-level vetting and input. While some participants pointed-out that data stewardship goes beyond the FRS context, there was agreement that the DSM would be bolstered through more reference to past data steward activities.

DSM Roles and Responsibilities Section: The following points were made: (1) There was agreement that the roles of "Regional Stewardship Coordinator" and "Regional Steward" could be merged; (2) the document needs to make it clear that Program Stewardship is not just a Headquarters function, but also an important activity at the Regional level; and (3) the document does not express the critical role of State data stewards (This is deliberate, since OIC wants and anticipates direct input from States on this matter.).

DSM Procedures Section: The following points were made: (1) The process diagram needs to be more specific with regard to State-level activity (The generality of the diagram is deliberate, as OIC seeks and anticipates direct input from States on this matter); (2) the document would be strengthened by inclusion of procedural material provided by Region IX.

Action Items: Participants were asked to review the draft DSM and submit written comments to Bill Sonntag. Based on recent conversations, OIC will elaborate the nine-item roll-out strategy distributed on 3/30 by Bill Sonntag.

Next Meeting/Call: The next Data Steward's conference call is scheduled for Thursday, April 13th, from 2:30-4:00.